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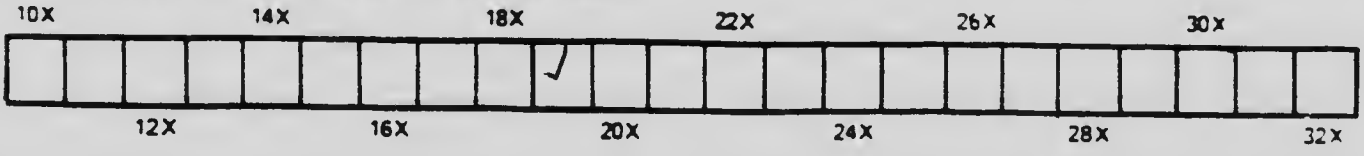

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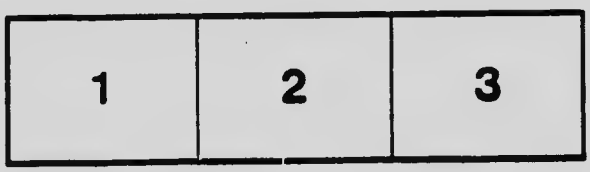

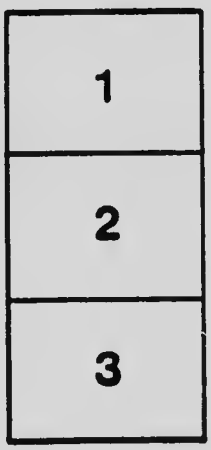

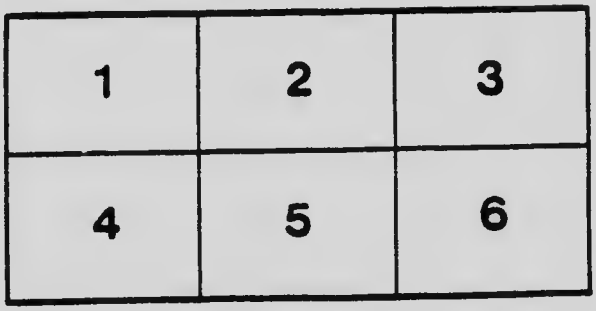

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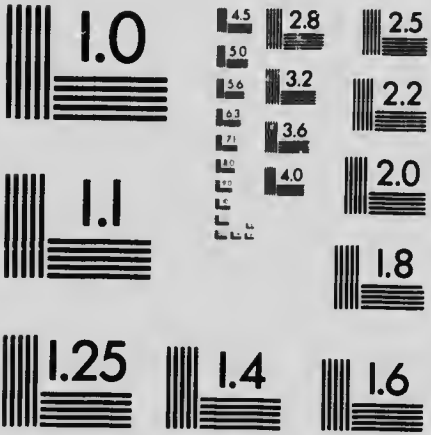

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THE CALL OF CANADA

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THE CALL OF CANADA

An address by the Hon. George E. Foster (Minister of Trade and Commerce for the Dominion of Canada) at a City luncheon organized by the Royal Colonial Institute, June 12, 1912

EARL GREY AND GENTLEMEN,—I feel entirely at home in this gathering, although far away from the home of my birth. That feeling is partly induced by finding so many old friends near to me and about me; it almost seems as though this part of old London had become for the time being a section of the Dominion of Canada, and a section of the most favoured part of the whole Dominion known under the name of Toronto. However, this is not the time for me to indulge in homelike feelings. My task has been set, and my subject has been named, without, of course, any consultation with me. That is the last thing ever accorded to a speaker, and the subject is so vast and the time is so short that it makes it a very difficult matter for me to know just where to begin, and I will find it just as difficult to know where to leave off, if I ever do. (Laughter and applause.)

It is wonderful—and it forces itself upon us in that light—how much one must reiterate and reiterate in order to enforce the plainest truth and spread information upon the most elementary subjects. Now, I have no right at all to conclude that the gentlemen seated round this table do not know in the main what ought to be known with reference to so great a country as Canada, and so important

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a part of the Empire; yet I am old enough to know that probably in the great rush and bustle of business there are very many things about Canada that you do not know, and many of them almost elementary in their nature and character. We in Canada ought to know a great deal about our Mother Country, and we do know a considerable amount about it. I think that the men of Canada know more about Great Britain than the men of the United Kingdom know about Canada, and it is only natural that this should be so.

However, I am going to ask you to-day to listen to me for a few moments whilst, in a very scrappy and very inadequate way, I attempt to lay before you some facts with reference to Canada and her growth, and to the face that Canada turns towards the Empire and the differences in that aspect arising out of a progress of some fifty years. If I were a painter, with a brush which was capable of doing it, I would paint and hang before you three pictures: one of Canada as she was fifty years ago, a second of Canada as she is in 1912, and third Canada as she will be in 1950 or thereabouts.

THREE GREAT EPOCHS.

If I could picture these three great epochs in the growth of Canada I would be able to unfold a story which would call to mind the best spirit, the best adventure, the best enterprise, and the best and palmiest times in the history of this old Empire of ours, repeated in another clime and upon another scene. In 1867, or thereabouts, we were absolutely unknit; our limbs were *disjecta membra*; our organisation amounted practically to nothing; Canada was a name upon the Statute Book, written upon paper, and scarcely anything more. And yet in that vast country which is now known under the name of Canada there were the possibilities of all that has arisen since and all that may arise in the future.

If one could have been gifted with prophetic insight he could have seen the splendid body of that Canada which was to be—latent, undeveloped, slumbering; for the impassioned kiss of the Empire-lover had not yet been placed upon her

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lips, and [illegible] numbers remained unbroken. Then came the period [illegible]tion. We went to work building railways without having anything in traffic for them to carry; building canals and peopling them with argosies evolved from the imagination. The Inter-Colonial Railway, involving millions, was built before there was anything for it to carry; the Canadian Pacific Railway was launched upon its three-thousand-miles extension before there was a pound of freight or a passenger to be taken, practically speaking. So, too, we were laying out the bounds of provinces which encompassed no population; we were surveying millions of acres of land without a settler upon them, or even a settler in sight. We were, in fact, doing underground work—exploration, blasting, tunnelling, laying connecting pipes without anything at that time to be passed through them, and that kind of work consumed the power and made its long draft upon the hopes of one generation of Canadians before results began to show.

Men said to us: "You are building the railway, but where are your freights and where are your settlers?" When we were beginning the system of protecting our industries they said: "Where are your factories and smoke-stacks, your clustering labourers?" and they had the laugh on us for a generation. That time, however, passed, and in 1912 there emerges above the level of the underwork—the groundwork—some outlines, in large and majestic proportions, of the superstructure to be raised upon it. Let no man be foolish enough to say in carping criticism that for a generation we did nothing in Canada. For a generation we were laying the groundwork; in the next generation we were building up the superstructure, and carving out the grand work of rich results. (Applause.)

THE POSITION TO-DAY.

To-day we have a yield of grain upon these Western lands amounting last year to 180,000,000 bushels of wheat in the three Prairie Provinces alone, enough to give four bushels of wheat to every man, woman, and child in the

United Kingdom, and a congestion for six or eight months, when all the facilities available were unequal to the task of moving the products that Canada's labour and Canada's production had assured. About 1876-8 we found that our population, small as it was, was being drained from us. The land lure in the west of the United States—the lure of the factory, of the United States factory, called upon our young people, and after some years nearly 3,000,000 of Canadian-born were found upon the fields and in the factories of the United States of America.

We came to the conclusion this must be stopped, and, contrary to all the canons, that it must be stopped by devising some method by which, with the co-operation of legislation, capital and industry might be planted in our own country, and around them villages might be built and towns and cities spring up. We might have gone wrong, according to the theories of Cobden and of the early writers; but, by George! we have had the results. (Loud applause.)

Doctrinaires are welcome to their theories and their doctrines if we can reap the results, and we have reaped them, and richly reaped them, in Canada. To-day the cry is "Build, build, build!" Our railways are insufficient for the work which is being pressed upon them, and we are building railways just as rapidly as capital can be got. No; that is not quite right—it is as rapidly as men can be got to put the labour into the work. (Applause.) There is no lack of capital; there is a lack of labour in Canada to-day, and the productions of the country are chasing the transport facilities of the country, and overtaking them at every point.

To-day we have but one line of railway which, in the winter time, connects the Western prairies with the Eastern seaports. By the time December snows come we shall have a second line, and within two or three years we shall have a third. Within two years the rails upon the Hudson Bay Railway will be up as far as the Hudson Bay waters, and a new route will thus be opened out, shorter by hundreds of miles to Great Britain and to Europe than any we now possess. Looking towards the West, there is one great

railway—the Canadian Pacific—which carries its freight and passengers to the Pacific Ocean. Within two years there will be two more; then we shall have three great transcontinental lines.

DOUBLE-TRACK TO THE PACIFIC.

I see the Canadian Pacific president has made the announcement that the Canadian Pacific Railway is going to double its track through the Rockies to the Pacific Ocean. Yet the cry is "Build, build, build!" Although these avenues are opening, and capital is plentiful and labour will be got, ten years from now production will still be chasing transport facilities in the Dominion of Canada, just as it is at the present day. Our seaports have suddenly awakened to the fact that they are inadequate for the work put upon them. At Vancouver, Victoria, and Prince Rupert, at Port Arthur, Toronto, Montreal, Quebec, Halifax, Sydney, and St. John, etc., millions upon millions of money are being spent in order to improve them for that great business which is to come out of the heart of the country, and is to seek foreign ports. Now I have given you, however inadequately, the picture of Canada of fifty years ago and to-day. Optimism is on the highest deck in the Dominion.

On the boat I met an old salt who went out to Canada in 1867, and asked him where he was now located. His reply was that he was located on the far shores of Vancouver Island. He started in Ontario, and by successive movings reached the extreme west. He had, he said, never found a place where he could not find plenty to do, and to earn plenty of money for doing it. He had at last struck a haven of rest, and he was going home to be a missionary for Canada. You cannot find a man in Canada who is not an optimist. The two exceptions to this, he told me, he met on the boat. He did not point them out to me, and did not describe them, but one was an Englishman who had gone down to the Niagara Peninsula. He complained that it was too isolated, although there was a railway within a rod of his farm, and had decided to come back to England.

Another had gone as far as Regina, but did not care for the food, and had left for home. These were the two exceptions who were not optimistic about Canada, and who are now somewhere about the shores of England.

But this review is insufficient unless we ask the further question: "What will Canada be fifty years from now?" To-day we have 7,000,000 of people. Last year 354,000 people came in as immigrants and settled in Canada. We took 138,000 from Great Britain, 132,000 from the United States of America, and nearly 80,000 from the rest of the world, making a grand total of 350,000. This year the number will at least be 400,000. You may lay down as a fairly reasonable estimate that for the next fifty years there will be an increase by immigration of at least 500,000 people per year into Canada. Add that to the natural increase, and in fifty years the population should be close on 50,000,000 people. (Applause.)

THE FUTURE.

If the aspect of Canada, as evidenced between the periods of 1867 and 1912, is different, how much more different will be the aspect of Canada in relation to this Empire when her population has grown from seven millions to forty or fifty millions of people. This thought impresses itself upon one. Ought we not to be thinking about it?—men in the United Kingdom, men in Canada, and men in the Overseas Dominions. If in a certain day 33,000 Scotch people were to make a trek to the port of Glasgow and find a fleet to take them at once over to Canada—33,000 at a time—what a commotion it would raise in Great Britain! Yet this was the number which went out from Scotland in 1911–12. If 130,000 people in these islands were to trek to Liverpool upon a given day of the week and take fleet for Canada, it would make a great many people who do not think certainly do so; but they went all the same—and they are going every year. What does that mean to this Old Country?—138,000 vacant chairs, vacant rooms, vacant places in the United Kingdom, as compared with last year;

138,000 fewer toilers in this country to work upon its raw materials and to do its labour; 138,000 fewer people to pay its municipal taxes and its general taxes; 138,000 fewer people to build homes and replenish them in this country. Emigrants they are called. I wish somebody would bar that word and substitute another. (Applause.)

When a man from Nova Scotia goes to British Columbia he is not called an emigrant. He has simply moved. What reason is there in the world, when a man goes from Scotland to Australia or to Canada, that he should not be put in the same class as the man who has simply moved and not emigrated? The head and centre of the Empire is poorer by 138,000 people, provided they have not simply moved to another portion of the Empire. Therein lies the whole question. There should be but one Empire. (Applause.) The citizen of one portion of it should be a citizen in every other portion of it; the man who goes from one to another has simply transferred his home, and not transferred his national characteristics. (Applause.) If these great, mighty outlying Dominions continue to grow as they will grow, and their populations increase as they will increase, fifty years will put the heart of the Empire and the outlying portions of the Empire in a very different position the one to the other. Are we not going to think about these things? Shall it always be *laissez faire?*

CURSED BE *LAISSEZ FAIRE.*

Yonder are indications of fire, behind it the wind is driving the flames towards your home; here you are, in your own home, asking yourself how many rooms you shall have within your dwelling, what compartments they shall be divided into, and what furniture shall be placed in each. You are warned of the danger. But, you say, let us settle this business now. Let us see how we are going to locate our own compartments and furnish our own rooms. Do not be excited over the fire, you say. God is good, anyway —the wind may change." (Laughter.) You can take that and translate it into a thought of Empire. From this day

forward, "accursed be *laissez faire*." Call it laziness—incapacity if you like ; call it cowardice if that be the best name ; but in the name of Heaven, men that have done what the outside Dominions have done, men who have done what the men of this great heart of Empire have done —shall we not come together and sit around one common table, put our wits to work, and join our hearts and brains, our wisdom and our experience, from every part of this Empire, and organize ?

What would Canada have been to-day had she not organized ? What would this Empire have been without organization ? Within twenty-five years it has outgrown the old organization. Shall we lie down, or sit still, and confess that we are not able to make the new and necessary organization which shall keep this Empire one, which will make those outside Dominions synonymous with the growth of Empire as a whole ? Shall we not take counsel together, plan together, work together, and so build up for the future an Empire which in the past has done so much for civilization, and which has so much left to do ? Does any man here believe that the British Empire has fulfilled its mission —the mission to its own generations unborn—if you go no further—its mission to the world, for which it still has great things in trust ? This work can only be carried on by the fullest co-operation, and by calling ultimately to the seats of council the best experience that the whole Empire grows beneath its wide skies and upon its broad fields. (Loud and tumultuous applause.)

The Chairman (Earl Grey), after warmly congratulating Mr. Foster upon his eloquent address, urged that some effort should be made to promote the holding of gatherings similar to those arranged by the Canadian Club throughout the Dominion, and by the Royal Colonial Institute in London. Much would be done in this way to foster the broad Imperial spirit.

At the close of the proceedings the large gathering manifested their good wishes, and wished Earl Grey "God-speed" on his departure to fulfil an Imperial mission in South Africa.